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AUTHOR Kise, Joan Duff
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ABSTRACT

This study analyzed aspects of the supervisory conference that uses the vehicle of microteaching to improve supervisor behavior. Six members of a Principles and Practices of Secondary Teaching class assumed the role of teacher in the microteaching situation, and graduate students enrolled in a Principles of Educational Supervision course performed in the role of supervisor. The following activities were recorded on video tape: a) the teacher presented a brief lesson; b) the supervisor and the teacher viewed the video tape and then a conference; c) the teacher presented the same lesson to a different group of students; and d) the supervisor and the teacher viewed the second tape and conferred again. The Blumberg system was used (after the initial teach) to analyze the verbal behavior of supervisors in terms of specific supportive behavior or general supportive behavior. As a group, the conferences which utilized specific behavior produced more change in teacher behavior in the reteach cycle of microteaching than did the general group. (JB)

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MICROTEACHING--A STUDY IN SPECIFIC AND GENERAL BEHAVIOR OF SUPERVISORS

Joan Duff Kise

Introduction

The educational strategy that this study is most concerned with is the improvment of instruction. One method of bringing about improvement of instruction can be supervision. A task of supervision is to produce change in instruction in our schools.

The supervisor's work includes helping to establish a favorable environment for learning and changing teacher behavior in the interest of better instruction.

More needs to be known about how to improve supervisory procedures, especially in the area of supervisory conferences. One vehicle that offers supervision instant feedback is microteaching. With microteaching, many variables involved in the learning process can be sorted out. Many of the complexities of classroom teaching can be reduced, thus allowing the researcher to analyze specifics.

The primary purpose of this study was to analyze aspects of the supervisory conference utilizing the vehicle of microteaching so that supervisor behavior can be improved. Data collection, analysis and evaluation focused on those outcomes related to supervisory skills and behavior.

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The Problem

One important supervisory task is to produce appropriate change in the behavior of the teacher. In the preparation of supervisors with the use of microteaching, what methods can a supervisor employ in a conference situation to produce desired change or changes in teacher behavior? The objective of this study was to examine supervisory behavior in a conference situation and its relationship to changing teacher behavior. The main purpose of the study was to determine whether specific or general supervisory behavior produced more changes from teach to reteach cycle of microteaching.

Questions to be Answered

1) Did the agreed-upon changes between teacher and supervisor occur when generally supportive behavior by the supervisor was employed?

2) Did the agreed-upon changes between teacher and supervisor occur when specific supportive behavior by the supervisor was employed?

3) Was there a significant difference in change of the teacher behavior when generally supportive behavior was employed, or when specifically supportive behavior was employed?

4) Were favorable attitudes on the part of the teacher expressed when specific supportive behavior was utilized by the supervisor?

5) Were favorable attitudes on the part of the teacher expressed when general supportive behavior was utilized by the supervisor?

6) Was there a significant difference in attitudes of teachers when general supportive behavior was utilized by the supervisor, or when specific supportive behavior was utilized by the supervisor?

7) What type of praise--specific or general supportive--was related to change in the teacher?

8) Did the use of teacher ideas by the supervisor relate to change on the part of the teacher?

9) Did asking for information, opinions, or suggestions from the teacher by the supervisor relate to change in the teacher?

Origin and Setting of the Study

In Summer I session of 1970, at the University of Akron, thirty-seven graduate students were scheduled into a "Principles of Educational Supervision" course instructed by Dr. Isobel Pfeiffer. This course was conducted in conjunction with an undergraduate course in "Principles and Practices of Secondary Teaching," also taught by Dr. Pfeiffer. Six members were in this class. These six people assumed the role of the teacher in the microteaching situation. During the microteaching situation, the teacher focused on specific skills. As there were more supervisors, on occasion, the members of the supervisor class performed the role of teachers, in addition to their role as supervisors. Volunteers from the College of Education at the University of Akron and Kent State University also performed the teaching role. Each microteaching session had sixteen teachers and there were eight microteaching sessions. In total, there were 128 teaching sequences. The activities were recorded on video tape and the following activities took place:

1) The teacher presented a brief lesson.

2) The supervisor and the teacher viewed the video tape and then had a conference.

3) After a short period of time for reorganizing, the teacher presented the same lesson to a different group of students.

4) The supervisor and the teacher viewed the second tape and conferred again.

The emphasis on the activities was aimed toward the upgrading of the teacher's performance. The vehicle of the supervisory conference, based on the replay of the video tape of the teaching, was the primary method utilized in obtaining growth in the teacher's performance.

The Blumberg system was used to analyze all the first conferences after the initial teach. The system was used to analyze verbal behavior of supervisors as to specific supportive behavior, or general supportive behavior.

Items one and six on the Blumberg Analysis were classified as General Supportive behavior.

Items five, seven, and eight were classified as Specific Supportive behavior.

Items two, three, and four fit neither category, but can be noted as specific (script s), or general (script g) behavior as fits the case.

Analysis of Data

The researcher, in observing conferences via video tape replays, listed the number of changes suggested for the reteach. The researcher then counted the number of changes that actually took place in the reteach and obtained a ratio of implemented changes. Specific and general categories were determined and a t-Test was used to determine the significance of difference between means of change ratios of specific supervisor action or general supervisor action and its relationship to change of teacher behavior in the reteach cycle of microteaching.

Findings

RESULTS OF TEST OF SIGNIFICANCE BETWEEN MEANS OF SPECIFIC VERBAL AND GENERAL VERBAL BEHAVIOR OF SUPERVISORS

	N	Mean	SD	SE	Diff.	SE Diff.	D.F.	T
General	35	0.238	0.348	0.059				
Specific	54	0.929	0.158	0.027				
Total	89	0.657	0.431	0.046	0.691	0.065	87	-10.668

The above table presents data involved in the test for significance. N stands for number. The mean is arrived at by counting the mean of the proportion of change in the specific category and the mean of proportion of change in the general category. SD is the estimated standard deviation or sum of squares. SE is the mean differences. DF is the degrees of freedom. The number of degrees of freedom of an estimate of a parameter always refers to the number of independent values which contribute to the estimate.

By utilising a table of Correlation and t Ratios, the t was examined at .05 level and .01 level. The .05 level was 2.632 and the .01 level was 1.987.

As a group, the conferences which utilized specific behavior produced more change in teacher behavior in the reteach cycle of microteaching than did the general group. There was no indication that supervisors were always specific or always general. This conference style seemed to be determined by the particular teacher the supervisor was dealing with and the circumstances surrounding the sessions.

There was an indication that supervisors who were general in a particular conference tended to be more general in the whole conference using very little specific verbalization.

Specific supervisors did not follow the same pattern. They tended to use more specific categories than general.

The changes agreed upon by teacher and supervisor occurred more often when specific supportive behavior by the supervisor was employed.

As a group, the teachers portrayed favorable attitudes whether the supervisors were specific or general.

The category of praise, both specific and general, was used rather infrequently throughout the whole study. When praise was used, there was no difference whether it was specific or general as related to change in teacher behavior.

The use of teacher ideas by the supervisor did relate to change on the part of the teacher. There was a strong indication that when a supervisor utilized a teacher's idea and made it into a commitment, more agreed upon change did take place.

In addition, when a supervisor asked for information, opinions, or suggestions from the teacher and manipulated the teacher's response into a specific commitment, teacher change did take place.

In many instances supervisors did change their conference style when the teacher's verbal replies indicated he wanted information and clarification, or questioned some aspect of the conference. The teacher, in many situations, seemed to control the conference and set the pace and style of the conference.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study did find that when supervisors were specific, more change did take place on the part of the teacher in the reteach cycle of microteaching than when supervisors were general.

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